

Invasive Species Council Meeting
Idaho State Department of Agriculture
May 23, 2006

Present:

Pat Takasugi, ISDA
Phil Bandy, ISDA
Tom Dayley, ISDA
Amy Van Hoover, ISDA
Ben Simco, ISDA
Nate Fisher, OSC
Steve Smart, NRCS
Bas Hargrove, TNC
Fred Partridge, IDFG
Mark Shuman, DEQ
Lane Jolliffe, Office of Congressman Butch Otter
Will Whelan, TNC
George Newcomb, UI CRISSP
Mike Kellet, USFS
Darrel Bolz, Idaho State Representative
Morgan Case, IDWR
Denise Mills, IDL
Cathy Ford, ITD
Mary Lucachick, IDPR
Andy Brunelle, USFS
Jon Foster, BLM

Phil Bandy opened the meeting with a discussion of membership on the agenda, and the fact that not all agencies had a representative present. He told everyone that the original executive order that authorized the Invasive Species Council expired on September 26, 2005, and the Council was now a "committee of agreement". The group needed to determine how to proceed. He said he'd provided Governor Kempthorne's administration with four different versions of a new executive order last fall, but the Governor had not acted on them. The executive orders were provided in both brief and detailed formats. Hopefully the new administration would act formally. He asked for group comments on the matter.

Representative Bolz commented that there had been 2003 legislation to establish the Council by statute.

Phil Bandy discussed the state's work to develop an aquatic nuisance species (ANS) plan. ISDA has an EPA Wetland Program Development Grant. ISDA's focus regarding invasive species is aquatics because the noxious weeds programs are so well developed. Most invasive funding is for aquatics. He said he was open to suggestions for subcommittee membership.

Will Whelan said there is increasing recognition for invasive species. The ANS area is the logical focus. Idaho's Action Plan for Invasive Species lists tasks and summaries.

Ben Simko provided a packet of information on the Cooperative Agriculture Pest Survey (CAPS) and an overview of exotic pest survey outreach. CAPS is a combined effort

between USDA and ISDA. The entity surveys for various pest species, these include both existing and imminent threats. Invasive species outreach efforts include contacting schools, especially the Boise School District and the Idaho State Science Teacher's Association to try to disseminate information, which would ultimately go to the students. He's hoping they can place him on the agenda for their next meeting. Ben said the CAPS report is on ISDA's website. He has also developed an invasive species display with the noxious weeds program.

Bas Hargrove asked Ben about the Asian gypsy moth. Ben provided the history of Asian gypsy moth surveillance. A trap provided a positive identification two years ago. Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) applied a spray program at the time. Idaho Department of Lands has not found any more in their traps. This year a European moth was trapped. There is a very high risk of spread for Asian gypsy moth, but the threat is less for the European moth. Will Whelan asked Ben where the moths originated from. Ben answered that the European moth was likely from recreational vehicles from east of the Rocky Mountains.

Lane Jolliffe asked if deficiency warrants would be used for funding. Ben Simko provided an overview of federal and state funding sources for different programs. The federal government provides species-specific grants, an example being the grant for managing crickets.

Representative Bolz asked Pat Takasugi about deficiency warrants. Pat explained that deficiency warrants were expanded last fall, from \$500,000 to \$5 million. It is an account that can be used for emergencies in the future. It is pre-approved spending authority. There is \$5 million for plant disease emergencies. It is not to be used for Eurasian watermilfoil. It can be used for a situation such as the potato cyst nematode. Idaho is well-prepared through the warrant system. Steve Smart asked about legislative approval before use. Pat replied that it was managed by a board of examiners. Representative Bolz explained that JFAC approves the deficiency warrants each January. They do ask questions about the expenditures.

Will Whelan commented that IDL uses their warrants for fires. He asked if ISDA's warrants are tied to the Plant Pest Act. He wanted to know if it could be used for the emerald ash borer. Pat Takasugi said the subject needed legal review. There is an overlap with IDL's authority for forest lands.

Pat asked George Newcomb about present action by the University of Idaho's Center for Research on Invasive Species and Small Populations (CRISSP). George Newcomb provided the group with CRISSP pamphlets. He told everyone that he is a plant pathologist. He is interested in studying the reasons some species become invasive. He said he was open to answering anyone's questions about CRISSP. The entity was funded by the State Dept. of Education with a \$970,000 grant. All funds are now committed and projects are projected to end within 2 years. George said that the faculty would meet within the next two weeks to discuss funding and methods to raise the profile of CRISSP. He provided an overview of some of the entity's projects, including a study on a fungus to stop spotted knapweed from sprouting, which will undergo future field testing.

Pat Takasugi asked George Newcomb whether the \$970,000 funding came before or after CRISSP was created. George answered that the \$970,000 came first, but there were already 24 faculty members working together.

Ben Simko told George Newcomb that he was interested in a list of CRISSP's projects. George said there is a list of the eight projects on the CRISSP website. Examples include the summer intern project, various weed projects, and a salmon project. Two of these are small population studies. There is also a policy and law project. Ben Simko asked George how to get a foot in the door on research that would help him as an entomologist. George suggested looking at the list of faculty on the CRISSP website. Ben asked whether or not there was a formal process for requesting help from CRISSP. George replied that there was no formal process; one would only need to ask.

Pat Takasugi asked George Newcomb for the name of the chairperson or lead of the organization. George replied that he and Lisette Waits are co-directors. Bas Hargrove commented that he and Phil Bandy sit on the CRISSP advisory board.

Phil Bandy asked George Newcomb the status of the CRISSP earmark request and whether the local University of Idaho contact could be helpful. George Newcomb replied that the earmark request was rejected but CRISSP plans to try again. Tim Prather comes to Boise often, but the local person would help as well. Pat Takasugi asked George whether the advisory group was large enough to provide input. He also asked the process on submitting a research request to CRISSP. George suggested that Pat send George and Lisette Waits the research request. The two of them meet with the advisory board once a year to discuss everything. Also, the advisory board wanted to raise CRISSP's visibility. Phil Bandy commented that the advisory board has also discussed having CRISSP interact with regional entities.

Ben Simko said he would like to interact with CRISSP on biostatistics. He asked who could help with this and about possible resources. George Newcomb said there is a statistical resource at CRISSP. He suggested Ben and others submit direct questions to either Lisette Waits or himself, and he would facilitate and assist with answering questions.

Andy Brunelle recommended more outreach and working with ISU and other entities. Denise Mills commented on the timeline for the Action Plan. Research and outreach are huge tasks and that this meeting could provide positive outcomes. Bas Hargrove said it was a good time for collaboration.

Tom Dayley gave an overview of ISDA's new program for Eurasian watermilfoil control. The Legislature appropriated \$4 million for EWM control and ISDA is providing grants for control efforts. ISDA's Noxious Weeds Program monitors the funds distribution. The Invasive Species Council's Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force provided a final report on its activities. The Task force found that infestations are relatively localized, but there are large numbers of susceptible waters within the state. Less than 10,000 acres estimated acres of infestations, although that figure increases almost exponentially. Representative Bolz helped in the legislative process. Tom said the deadline was fast approaching for project applications. The \$4 million was intended for 2 years. There was \$6.5 million requested.

Tom Dayley said that Governor Kempthorne and Director Takasugi appointed a group to review and rate applications. There are technical people on the committee. Ratings are submitted to ISDA. ISDA completes an internal review, and staff provides ISDA's director with recommendations. ISDA hopes to complete the process and provide notice of funding to applicants by July 1st.

Tom Dayley said that the Task Force found major infestations in 2 regions. There are 26 projects, which represent all areas of the state. ISDA should be able to address Eurasian

watermilfoil in all geographical areas. Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA) are statewide, as is the Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force. This is how the program is funded to address the problem. The Task Force provided its final report with recommendations. This year's legislation acted based on this report. ISDA hopes to respond with positive action and a positive response back to the legislature.

Director Takasugi told everyone that Representative Eric Anderson spearheaded the effort. Phil Bandy said that Idaho is in the lead for Eurasian watermilfoil, although nationally, invasive species funding generally isn't exclusive to Eurasian watermilfoil. The Task Force released its final report at a meeting in April. ISDA now requests guidance on Task Force direction. The Task Force surveyed waters that fit a risk matrix threat level. He said he hopes the Task Force can survey the rest of Idaho's waters. We also want to know if we need to look for other risks besides Eurasian watermilfoil, which is a noxious weed.

Tom Dayley asked Phil Bandy to explain tasks with the EPA Wetland Program Development Grant. Phil said that he asked Sandy Daniel, from the Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force, to provide and compile information on other invasive species, which is a task that will meet the needs of the EPA grant. The Task Force has been a great resource.

Director Takasugi asked Council members the question of whether the Task Force should expand in name and scope. He gave the example of "Rapid Response Task Force."

Phil Bandy asked Bas Hargrove about early detection/rapid response through the Idaho Weed Coordinating Committee (IWCC). Bas said the IWCC had been focused on terrestrial species to date. IWCC planned to provide a white paper to the Invasive Species Council soon, hopefully at the next meeting. In the future, it could be a joint effort. The Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force's risk assessment was a good tool for the legislature.

Phil Bandy said that Sandy Daniel, Dave Lamb, Tom Kerr were all very interested in continuing the task force.

Ben Simko said that the PPQ model exists. Perhaps the task force could be used for "orphan" species, and not duplicate efforts under current statutory authorities. Will Whelan said other ANS "orphans" include zebra mussels, New Zealand mud snails, and rock snot. The task force should have priorities, and he asked whether the priorities should be connected with an ANS plan.

Fred Partridge commented that the council should keep Fish and Game involved. They have the expertise. Phil Bandy said that Sandy Daniel wants to participate.

Tom Dayley gave the example of Florida's Eurasian watermilfoil problem. Florida contacted ISDA and it seemed there was excitement over the potential to eradicate it. Steve Smart said we need to continue survey efforts so we know the locations of infestations. We get boaters from everywhere. He suggested the task force continue survey efforts.

Pat Takasugi talked about ISDA outreach. Roger Batt's public service announcement is one effort, but we need to continue to survey. Even if we control it with \$4 million, it could be reestablished in 5 years. Tom Daley commented that other federal agencies fund washing stations and outreach. Hopefully those agencies will help ISDA with outreach. Bas Hargrove said he agreed with continuing the survey.

Steve Smart asked if there was a better way to utilize existing resources. Pat Takasugi said that grant moneys from CWMAs are directed through CWMAs and the program is maturing. ISDA will continue to utilize the noxious weeds program. The CWMAs are still key to ISDA's program. The Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force will fund surveys east of Mountain Home. Phil Bandy said the Task Force surveys weren't on rivers, but there may be eddies that would be susceptible. Tom Dayley said the Task Force will expand surveys with CWMA funding. Pat said if ISDA secures constant funding, ISDA will use existing groups. The CWMAs are already organized. The July 1st start date for the EWM Control Program was coming soon.

Andy Brunelle suggested ISDA request before and after project photos to show progress. Pat Takasugi explained some of the reporting requirements. He said he thinks Idaho's program will be a good model for national invasive weed groups.

After the break, Pat Takasugi said he wanted to discuss the fact that the Invasive Species Council is an unauthorized body. He posed the question as to whether or not the council is necessary. Steve Smart said that the council developed the plan, and would need to update the plan. Without the council, what mechanisms would Idaho have? Pat said that noxious weed efforts are organized, but not all invasive species are plants. There are many sources of threats. Bas Hargrove said that invasive species are not limited to Idaho. It requires a multidisciplinary approach. Denise Mills said that the council provides opportunities to discuss problems and new issues, and to decide priorities. It is a good way to communicate, and identify areas that need research. It does have a valid role and the membership seems appropriate.

Pat Takasugi discussed the different drafts of executive orders. The drafts include tribal representatives, which is important. Membership was initially limited to state agencies, then federal agencies, because of the federal lands. Council membership was eventually opened to others. He asked for comments on how large the group needed to be.

Jon Foster said that the Invasive Species Council is necessary to reinforce collaborative efforts. Federal entities support Idaho's Invasive Species Council. Phil Bandy suggested the group could help to formulate suggestions for filling gaps. Ben Simko suggested an example of expanding the Weed Awareness Campaign to all invasive species. He said that each year there are 38,405 vehicles registered from other states. This may be a way to distribute information on invasive species. Phil Bandy commented that Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game sells large numbers of out of state fishing and hunting licenses. Fred Partridge commented that some states are a major concern. In less than 24 hours we can get invasive species from anywhere globally. Fred said there is a need to format communications. Phil Bandy said there are opportunities for funding through fees.

Representative Bolz said that some people don't understand that the Invasive Species Council is not a duplication of ISDA's noxious weeds program. Pat Takasugi told everyone that the feedback he'd received was that the CWMAs were worried that the invasive species program would take their funding. This was a topic of discussion at the legislature. There is a need for education even at the CWMA level.

Pat Takasugi asked for any suggestions as to membership additions for the executive order. Denise Mills suggested The Nature Conservancy. Bas Hargrove suggested industry groups, including the nursery and seed industry, and the pet trade association at the national level. Petco provides outreach regarding not throwing away aquarium fish. Phil Bandy suggested the Forest Products Commission.

Lane Jolliffe asked the method for setting the meeting time. He suggested that the congressionals should be invited. The list on the agenda needs updating regarding designees versus invitees. Perhaps ISDA could better distribute information on Invasive Species Council meetings. Pat Takasugi explained that originally, state agencies were to work together on the same path. The Nature Conservancy helped fund the coordinator position. We now can look further out, with federal agencies and expanded information sharing. Pat agreed that the contact list needs updated.

George Newcomb asked whether the Council should continue with four subcommittees. Phil Bandy said we need subcommittees that can help the council. George suggested a questionnaire. Bas Hargrove suggested an executive committee of 5 or 6 people to make decisions and recommendations for the council. Pat Takasugi suggested that this is the time to look at the effectiveness of the council. The group is now too large to make decisions, but a group this large is necessary to obtain feedback on all issues. The Invasive Species Council needs to supply reports to the Legislature and the public. Phil Bandy said that during previous meetings, subcommittees made status reports to the Council. The Council then provided additional direction.

Mark Shuman said the discussion so far has been on the council implementing its own plan. Perhaps the tasks could be divided up to subcommittees. The plan provides the direction. Pat Takasugi asked how the council could best aid agencies. George Newcomb suggested a calendar of invasive species activity on the website. Pat asked how to convey needs to agencies and entities. He asked George specifically how to obtain university action on an invasive species problem. George asked about invasive species lists of species of concern. Phil Bandy said that both a regional list and a statewide list are needed. Ben Simko added that there is an Oregon model of 100 top species. There is also the CAPS model. An integrated list would help.

Phil Bandy suggested training modules for field staff. There is a need for multi-agency training. George Newcomb suggested CRISSP as a source for this.

Bas Hargrove said that the Idaho Weed Coordinating Committee is an example for communications between the Invasive Species Council and directors. The Nature Conservancy wrote a letter to BLM regarding provisions for weed free forage. The group's letterhead helped to start NEPA review.

Mary Lucachick said there are posters on Eurasian watermilfoil and New Zealand mud snails on the boat ramps at state parks. Other mitigation efforts exist.

Pat Takasugi said all agencies need to know of the resources. Mark Shuman said that DEQ staff carries cards with plant examples. Pat Takasugi suggested that the scouts could be a resource. Steve Smart said that it's even more important to get to the message to all personnel, not just directors. Public service announcements and interactive website are good ideas. Outreach is important outside of the agency. Denise Mills said the Save the Trails campaign cost \$80,000, and different agencies contributed. Jon Foster said there are plenty of models of multi-agency work, which is fiscally effective. Pat Takasugi said it is good to know agencies can save money through combined efforts. Phil Bandy said the Eurasian watermilfoil issue heightened interest in damage on recreation and other economic areas. George Newcomb said some species are unknown organisms. We're looking for known species, but others aren't known and can be a surprise.

Pat Takasugi outlined the priorities: 1. Authorize the Invasive Species Council. Anyone interested in helping to draft executive orders should contact Phil Bandy; 2. Post meeting dates. 3. Add congressionals and legislators to the contact list.

Bas Hargrove said that regular meetings are needed. Phil Bandy said the executive order should require at least two meetings a year. Pat Takasugi suggested quarterly and all agreed that the main Invasive Species Council should meet quarterly. There will be an agenda with a list of attendees and changes for these meetings.

The next meeting was tentatively set for the afternoon of July 10, 2006.